

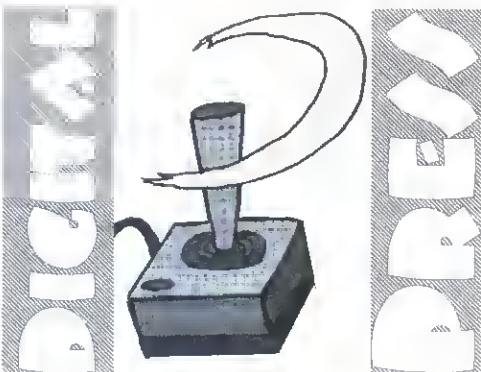
DIGITAL DREW

THE BIO-DEGRADABLE SOURCE FOR VIDEOGAMERS



#21:

FAME.



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FAME.

EDITOR'S BLURB by Joe Santulli

Greetings for the twenty-first time from Team DP and me. Can ya believe it's been three years already? I feel like I'm still getting my feet wet with this fanzine and somehow I've pumped out twenty one issues. If you've been with us for awhile (and actually like us!), there's a lot more coming. And I say "a lot" because my thesaurus isn't nearby.

So what is the price of fame? Sacrifice? Demoralization? A soul? From this gamer's point of view, it seems to be about \$60. I can't believe there is still a designer who thinks that any movie that's made more money than it cost to produce it is a guaranteed success as a videogame. Ever since the Atari 2600, there has been an incontrovertable (ah, there's that thesaurus) number of failures in this area. I'll list a few in case your memory is as bad as mine: E.T. Great Texas Chainsaw Massacre. Gremlins. Die Hard. Total Recall. Home Alone. Lethal Weapon. Batman Returns. The list goes on, but it's embarrassing to this hobby to even think about them, so I'll spare us all.

Then there are celebrity endorsements, which are less dangerous because they're simply games with someone's name attached to it. I often wonder how much the pros "get their hands dirty" with the games they endorse. I'll betcha Pat Riley, Buster Douglas, and Mike Ditka didn't even play their endorsed products until it was too late... either that or they'd never played a good videogame of their sport before signing on that dotted line.

I'm not completely jaded in this category. There are a few exceptions. In all, the "endorsement" theme is very intriguing to me. In this issue, we'll give you a round-up of many such games as well as the usual assortment of zany madcap fun you've come to expect from us. Sean Kelly's ROMpage will be of particular interest to many collectors (just read it now!), and Bill Schultz' now-acclaimed (see Computer Game Review, Sept '94) column "Alternate Currents" seems to have found its niche.

And just remember - if you've had half as much fun reading this issue as I did putting it together, that means that I had twice as much fun as you did. Sorry it didn't work out in your favor!

**ON THE
COVER**

CAPITALISM QUEST
by Joe Santulli

If you're a name, you're a game. And the game's sequel. It's strange but true - even loser games like Home Alone have sequels because the movie sequel was popular!

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SUSPICIOUS!

Dear Michael,

Received your new game list today and thought I should let you know that someone else is using your name! As a matter of fact he wrote an article for the Digital Press, using terms like "price gougers", "fast-buck artists", "greedy" and even worse things to criticize folks like yourself that are only trying to sell a few games on the side. This guy claims he can buy the games for \$0.50 each, and wouldn't think of gouging his fellow collectors with any sort of profit motive, which he calls an absurd attitude.

In looking through your list I compared a few prices to my own list and don't blame you for getting as much as you can out of your games. I only wish I could find customers to pay the same price for my games. Perhaps you would buy my games at my regular catalog price and then you can resell them for a good profit.

Some of the 2600 games with your catalog prices noted first were: Solar Fox - your price \$8 (I will sell to you for \$6, which gives you a nice 33% profit!); Wizard of Wor - your price \$10 (I will sell to you for \$6, which gives you a big 67% profit!); Planet Patrol - your price \$18 (I will sell to you for \$12, you get another big 67% profit!).

For the ColecoVision I can sell you: Bump N Jump - your price \$20 (I will sell to you for \$12, you get a whopping 67% profit!); Roe N Rope - your price \$15 (I sell for \$10, only a 33% profit for you, but still not bad!).

I sure wish we could both buy all those neat games for \$0.50 like that guy using your name in the last issue of Digital Press. Then we could really make some big money! I am sending a copy of this to Joe at Digital Press so he can check into that other guy who is using your name and

see if he can put a stop to it. I'll ask him to publish it so we can warn others. Maybe you should write to him too and tell him you don't mind someone using your name if they would just stop calling you a price-gouger! Oh by the way, if you want to catch him red-handed, you might watch your mailbox. He is using your address also. Can you imagine the nerve of the guy!

Jerry Greiner
Beaverton, OR

Whoa! Controversy! I'll step aside on this one and let Michael defend himself in another little letter I call...

MIFFED!

Jerry,

What's your problem? Did I mention you by name in the article in DP? NO! Beats the hell out of me why you'd take the time to point out to me that you have lower prices on certain games. Did something I said strike you the wrong way? Did I say in my article that I could get ALL my games for \$0.50? No, I said I COULD if I was lucky. I also said that I would be reluctant to pay big money for the games since there are so many great NEW games to get.

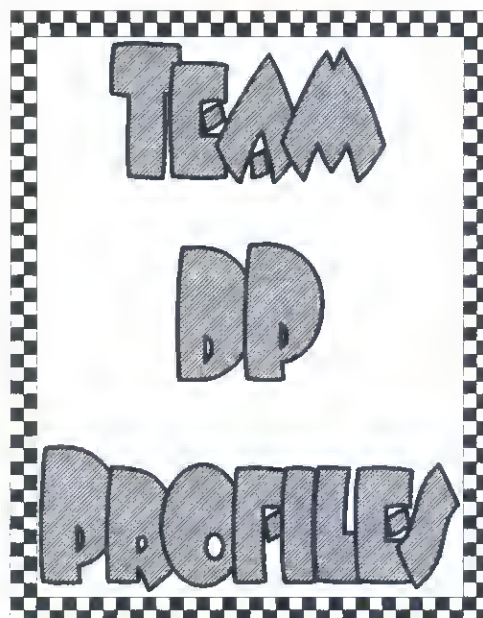
I never said that I don't think I should be entitled to fair value for my games, did I? NO.

You want to know the real reason I price my games so high? People always want a great deal on these things (will you take \$5 for your listed \$10 games?). I don't mind giving people deals, but the people who want to rip me off are usually the dealers. I'm sick and tired of this whole scene anyway. How come everybody wants you to give your stuff away, but they don't want to give me deals on their stuff? Oh sure, they always make up excuses. It cost me X dollars to get this... oh please! Since I'm a private collector, people think that I'm a sucker.

Am I wrong to be pissed about my childhood memories turning into some kind of collectibles snake pit? That's why I started to collect anyway. I pretty much have everything I always wanted. This stuff I see now is just extras. So what if a few of my games are priced higher than yours (like it's a crime to overprice a rare game or two)? But ME - I'm the hypocrite bad guy, right?

Michael Pallisano
Norwalk, CT

I'm going to take sides here - I'm with you, Mike. Going through both of your lists, I find that your game prices are very reasonable. I really don't understand Jerry's argument at all. What is happening to this hobby? Before these dealers



Howie "The Howitzer" Hirsch



AGE: 492

EYES: Devoid

GAMING LIKES/DISLIKES:

"I definitely do not like shooters or SFII / "tournament"-style fighting games. You might as well throw away any games that use all six buttons on a SNES, too. I like them simple."

WHAT HE DOES FOR A LIVING: His company calls him an "RJE Operator". That's an entry-level computer operator to you.

WHAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW: Howie is a die-hard train & model car collector, a Dungeons & Dragons regular, and a fan of Japanese Anime & Monty Python.

Bill "It's the Rats, Billy" Schultz



GAMING LIKES/DISLIKES:

If you can throw a punch at it, draw blood from it, throw it into a fiery hole, or run over it with a truck equipped with spiked wheels, you're talking about a game he likes. Bill is what we call a full-contact videogamer.

WHAT HE DOES FOR A LIVING: His company calls him a "DQA Analyst". That's a data quality person to the outside world.

WHAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW: Bill is recently the proud daddy of future videogame legend Alec Schultz, who we've discovered (via a history book that has passed backward through time), will one day destroy the universe.

started moving in there was never an issue on overpricing. I miss the old days when you could find an unusual title on someone's "for sale" list and actually buy it without having to sell your car first! Jerry, you've got to lighten up. This may be a business for you, but for the rest of us, it's a hobby. And we'd like to keep it that way.

DEAD!

Russ Perry tells me you've popped in and out of Chicago for one day. How were we to know? We thought you were dead? Maybe you really are...

Anyway, I'm hoping DP stays around, what with all these top faneds disappearing. No more Paradox? IBTL? And where the hell is Nathan Hauke?! It must be some girlfriend, that's all I'm thinking.

Now that the NES is almost ten years old, I'm hoping to see attention to the Nintendo in DP. I've begun collecting carts & accessories in earnest, and there are already some gadgets that are considered rare, particularly Ascii's Zapper and remote joystick - both were marketed under their dismal Nexoft label. I picked up the Zapper at Toys R Us for \$5 bucks in Chicago, and I've only heard about the stick from others. It's very hard to find, almost as much as Tengen's Tetris and the Mega Drive version (which someone I bumped into knew about).

Dan Thomas MacInnes
V
Edina, MN

Well, it's no surprise that you think I'm dead. I've been avoiding you like the plague! Seriously, though - part of it is because I have you listed living in Agoura Falls, MN on my list, part is because the Zip code I had for you was 99...something (a California Zip!) You gotta settle down somewhere. I'm no good at this database stuff! I was at the CES for two days, actually - Friday and Saturday - and I was there for the ENTIRE DAY both days. I spent the bulk of Saturday at the 3DO booth. I don't know how you missed me, although I did meet Brian Goss (Guru) there. I hope you don't take this personally, but I wasn't looking for you while I was there. I'm a shy fella.

ENLIGHTENED!

Dear Joe,

I've been a video gamer for some 17 years now, I've seen a lot of systems come and go and I have a fondness for the classics. It did my heart proud to read your article on collecting - when you said you would rather play Worm Whomper on your Intellivision than Joe Montana Football on the

Sega CD I was thrilled. I don't know why today's games are so inferior, maybe it's because the classics are just that - classics. They remind us of a simpler time where we thought we could be kids forever. We all grew up but we kept the classics to remind us of our childhood. I think a lot of people feel the same way. We've come out of the cellar and our numbers are rising. Today's games are style with no substance. They sell the sizzle but not the steak.

You and your group (also known as the video gaming gods) should pat yourself on the back, for making such a clear and concise 3rd Collector's Guide. You and your friends really have outdone themselves. I don't know how you are going to top this Guide but good luck trying. I did have one small criticism (I still can't find the hatch key) but seriously folks the criticism was with PsychOpedia, there were a couple of new items, but for the most part you had the same items as in previous DP issues. That part of the Guide is my only complaint.

In your Guide you refer to "third party support" for a video game. What does that mean? When you make up these Guides, where do the prices come from? For instance a game like Entombed is \$12 - how do you arrive at that price?

Kreag Clar
Rochester, NY

Kreag, "third-party support" is when a company like Activision produces a game for an Atari machine. Atari stands to gain nothing monetarily in this situation, but the extra software will sell more hardware. In the case of systems like the Emerson Arcadia or the GCE Vectrex, third-party support is non-existent, which is why the software libraries for those systems are so limited. As for the guide prices, the initial prices were gathered via an immense number of personal "for sale" lists, catalogs, and collector gut feel. Since those original prices, I've struck a balance between them, the input of several dealers, and the same gut feel from collectors who are very active in the hobby.

SNATCHED!

Hi Guys,

I made my best find of the last five years yesterday and wanted to share it with you. The Odyssey 3 does exist... at least in a working prototype form. It does play all Odyssey 2 games but does not have built-in speech synthesis as it was originally announced to have. It's features track very well with the reviews that appeared in Video Games and Electronic Fun. It has a smaller footprint than the Odyssey 2 and the keyboard is a dream by comparison. At the same time I also found another Power Lords prototype. All and all a very good day on the hunt.

W. Jayson Hill
Knoxville, TN

SKEPTICAL!

Reading through your CES coverage on Sega, I have a few comments. How can you say the Genesis 32X looks hot when most of the games announced for it were nowhere to be seen? It sounds to me like the 32X is going to be another repeat of the Sega CD - lack of software at launch, mediocre titles appearing up to a year late after the initial hype, and planned obsolescence once Sega brings out the next ultra-mega frob (i.e. Saturn).

I passed up on the Sega CD after waiting over a year for Sega to come out with a title that would make me want to buy it (Sonic CD almost counts if there weren't three and a half Sonic games already available on the Genesis. Heck, I just got Sonic Spinball a week ago and I still haven't even gotten Sonic 3 yet). The only thing the Sega CD has to offer over the console are some work-your-way-through-the-decision-tree pixelated FMV games and ports of IBM PC games. There's no system-seller like the original Sonic (which sold me on the Genesis) or StarFox (which sold me on the SNES).

Soon, Sega developers will be faced with a staggering array of systems to develop for: the Genesis, the Sega CD, the Genesis+32X, the Genesis+32X+Sega CD, and the Saturn. Many developers don't have the resources to develop for all of these similar yet different platforms. They will choose one and ignore the rest, or develop for the lowest common denominator (the Genesis) and do lame ports to the more powerful systems. From the start, I had the feeling that the Sega CD would always be a second-class citizen to the console unit when it came to game titles, and I think time has borne out that prediction. Now I think there won't be enough room in the marketplace for all of these platforms. For one thing, I think we will see very few games for the 32X+CD combo.

The whole thing makes me nervous enough to not want to rush to the store when the 32X comes out. Call me one jaded (at age 28) game consumer.

Michael Porteus
San Francisco, CA

Er... you're probably right. I'm certainly not going to argue with that thinking. I'm a Sega CD owner and although I disagree that there aren't any system sellers (NHL Hockey, AH-3 Thunderstrike, Chuck Rally, and Dracula are favorites of mine), they certainly haven't reached their potential. I'd hold off, too. On the other hand, Sega hasn't really let up on the Sega CD

yet... isn't it possible that they may continue to produce games on all platforms? They didn't "give up" on the Genests when the CD came out. Let's bring it up again in another year, and if you're right you can say I told you so. But for now, I'm not so sure that the Sega CD is a complete failure.

ANTICIPATING!

Joe,

Your video ("Live From Your Home") was fun to watch. Definitely do it again. I've watched it a couple of times and it's nice to know there are other people with lots of great junk in their homes. If you do it again, I'll see if I can put some funny stuff on the tape like my cat jumping up and batting at the fish in "Shark! Shark!" or maybe my eight month old baby playing level 63 on Tempest 2000.

"PsychOphile" in the latest DP was a lot of fun to read - especially the Disaster final comment. I must say that of all the "different" games out there, this game is the lamest. I'm looking forward to the next "PsychOphile"!

Your Summer CES summary was cool, but I missed Sean Kelly's "ROMpage". I'd like to see Sean get in every issue. Just a thought.

Steve Averitt

Lima, OH

I'd like to see Sean in every issue, too - and so would most of our readers, based on the letters I've been receiving lately. Well, my hotmeyer's back and in top form. On the other topic, we'll definitely have a "Live From Your Home" video II. Sequels make the world go round, and that project was so much fun to see in its final form. Thanks for the input!

DZIOBECKI!

Dear Joe,

I have a suggestion. For the next DP scavenger hunt, why not focus on EG fandom itself. I have come up with some possible categories... see if your readers can find:

- A fan-ed who doesn't print the first letter he gets from a company.

- A fan-ed who releases 'zines consistently on time and has a social life (or a fan-ed who releases 'zines consistently on time and doesn't criticize late publishers)

- A fan-ed with no access to "hi-tech computer systems" that doesn't attack other 'zines for looking too prozine-ish.

- An article in a fanzine that begins, "This may be controversial, but this is only MY opinion", that actually IS controversial.

- A fan-ed who is young and doesn't constantly point it out.

- A fan-ed who, after three issues, hasn't lost sight of the fact that publishing is supposed to be fun.

- A fan-ed who draws well and doesn't think he's the best artist in fandom.

- A nice reader from Belgium.

On second thought, forget it; this scavenger hunt would simply be too difficult - if not impossible.

Noah Dziobecki
XENOPHILIA
Long Beach, CA

This may sound controversial, but this is only MY opinion - I think you're being sarcastic. But it is good to hear from you again.

Did I mention that I'm very young? (at least in relation to the universe)

Questions? Answers? Denials? Referrals? Disclaimers? BRING THEM ON! I love mail! And if you want a really quick response, reach me on America On-Line at DigitPress or the Internet at digitpress@aol.com!

THE ROARING STORY OF A GIVE-AND-TAKE GUY!

He took plenty from the chiselers...the crooks...and the tin-horns...and gave 'em nothing in return!



JOE SANTULLI

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TECHNICOLOR

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- #2: Whither ColecoVision?, ColecoVision Checklist pt I, Family Tree: Shooters, Worst of Atari 2600 pt II.
- #3: How to Train a Non-Gamer, Genesis Football Side-by-Side, Worst of Atari 2600 pt III, ColecoVision Checklist pt II, Streets of Rage Strategy.
- #4: Whatever Happened To....?, Vectrex Checklist, Worst of Intellivision, Videogame Mags Side-by-Side, Atari 2600 Rarities pt I.
- #5: Life of the Party Videogames, Channel F Checklist, Atari 2600 Rarities pt II, Gamepro TV Review, Scavenger Hunt '92.
- #6: Weird Games, Summer CES '92, Buyer's Guide to Classic Systems, SNES Golf Side-by-Side, Astrocade Checklist, Atari 2600 Rarities pt III.
- #7: What If...?, Worst of Genesis pt I, Atari 5200 Checklist, Atari 5200 Vs. ColecoVision Side-by-Side, Atari 2600 Rarities pt IV.
- #8: The Darker Side of Gaming, Odyssey2 Checklist, SuperCharger pt I, PsychOpeda begins.
- #9: Ups & Downs of '92, Night Trap Solution, SuperCharger pt II, Intellivision Checklist pt I.
- #10: Sequels, DP Style, Atari 2600 Rip-offs pt I, Intellivision Checklist pt II, ColecoVision A/V Inputs, New 5200 Prototypes Discovered!, Coleco Adam Feature.
- #11: DP Interviews Daniel Bass - Intellivision

Programmer, Worst of ColecoVision, Atari 2600 Rip-offs pt II.

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#15: SCARY: Creepy Classic Carts, Horror Games We'll Never See, Rare Ware: Compu-Mate, Fanzine X-ing with VG Experience.

#16: BRAWL: Six Intangibles of Videogames, Tournament Fighting Games Side-by-Side, The Perfect Fighting Game, Atari Jaguar First Impressions, Upgrading your Genesis, Fanzine X-ing with Zineophilia, Worst of Neo-Geo, pt I.

#17: BRATS: Jess Ragan's Land of Rare & Exotic Coin-Ops, Hollywood Looks at Videogames II, Classic Kids' Games, Jaguar Rebuttal.

#18: FOOLISH: April Fools' 1994 - purely for laughs.

#19: RUSH: Collectors: hobbyists or biddies?, Jess Ragan's Land of Rare & Exotic Coin-Ops pt 2, The GameLine System, Classic "Panic Games".

#20: ALTERNATIVES: Classic Videogame Board Games, SCES '94 Coverage, Videogame Trading Cards II, Classic Knick-Knacks, Name This Game Contest, Fanzine X-ing with The Laser.



DP CROSSOVER WITH 2600 CONNECTION!

We had TWO Fan-eds send crossovers our way in the past two months (the other was from Infestation - we'll run that next issue). The following was submitted by our good friend, Tim Duarte, who snagged a great interview and unselfishly contributed it to us (applause). In return, Tim received an article by Kevin Oleniacz that will run in a future issue of the 2600 connection. Until then, enjoy the musings and witticisms of Tim Duarte.

HOMETOWN HERO - AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN VAN RYZIN

by Tim Duarte, editor of The 2600 Connection

New Jersey is famous for many things...Atlantic City, The Boardwalk, The New Jersey Devils hockey team, rock star Bruce Springsteen, the rock band Bon Jovi, etc. In the video game world, it's also the home state of Digital Press. And did you know that a number of video game programmers are from New Jersey? I bet you thought they were all from California! Not so. I recently tracked down John Van Ryzin, probably best known in the classic gaming community for programming **HERO**, a quite popular Activision game for the Atari 2600. Here's what we chatted about.

TD: How did you get into programming videogames? Did you study it in school?

JVR: No, I went to school for Electrical Engineering. I was in a program where if you got a summer job that was related to your field, you could earn college credits. I ended up getting a summer job at a place that was making hand-held electronic games—the ones with LED lights on them. Then the Atari 2600 came out, and the company wanted to move from making the hand-held games to the Atari games.

TD: What company was that?

JVR: That was Wickstead Design Associates.

TD: I've never heard of that company.

JVR: This is the company that Garry Kitchen came from. I wasn't creating 2600 games there; I was building prototypes of electronic toys. When I graduated from college, Garry Kitchen left Wickstead and started writing games for himself. So I started writing games on my own. He would get deals and sell them for me.

TD: Were these the Activision games you designed?

JVR: No, these were games for the Apple II computer. I started out by buying an Apple II computer and I wrote a few games and they were published by Hayden Software. I did that for about a year, and then I was hired by Activision after that.

TD: Do you recall any of the names of the hand-held games you designed?

JVR: I didn't create any. I was just a "junior guy" who didn't even have

his degree yet. I just created these prototypes of wacky toy ideas that they had.

TD: For the Atari 2600, were **HERO** and **Cosmic Commuter** the only games you did while at Activision?

JVR: I worked on some others. But for games that were totally my work, those were the only two.

TD: When you were programming games for the 2600 at Activision, how much code sharing went on? The games seem to be based on the same graphic and scoring "engine" or style.

JVR: There were a few basic things, such as the logo and the score, that were shared. But other than that, everything was written from scratch. There was a lot of sharing of ideas. For example, someone would figure out a trick how to do something and they would tell everyone else how it was done.

TD: Were the 2600 games written on the Apple II?

JVR: No, those two games were written on a DEC PDP-11.

TD: What was the process of creating a game for the 2600?

JVR: I would write the program on the PDP-11 and then compile the program. It was then transferred, or downloaded to a development system—a box that emulates an Atari 2600. The box had a joystick coming out of it, so I could sit there and play it. I didn't have to burn a ROM. I could make changes to the program on the PDP-11, and transfer it to the box again for testing. Inside the box was a 2600, but a

number of "tools" were connected to it. I could stop the game, and examine what was going on. I could de-bug my program.

TD: How does this development system compare to the ones for other systems you created games on?

JVR: Well, on the Commodore 64, I would just program right on that machine. It was much more elaborate, though. A real simple development system would be where you'd just emulate the ROM—the chip that has the program in it. This is the easiest development system to create, but the hardest to use. There are no tools for looking for "bugs." The development systems for the Genesis and Super Nintendo are very



John Van Ryzin is best remembered by classic system gamers as the man who designed HERO for Activision.

elaborate. They are similar to the Atari 2600 development system, where I can stop the program and examine registers, start the game again, etc. It makes it very easy to find bugs in the program.

TD: What about development systems for the Game Boy and Game Gear?

JVR: Yes, they're available.

TD: Do you have to buy development systems, or do you rent them?

JVR: It varies. A programmer can buy one from Nintendo or Sega, or from third-party companies that create them. Or, you can create your own. Basically, the more elaborate the development system is, the more money it costs.

TD: HERO was one of the first games to feature a rainbow-style Activision logo on the screen. Were you responsible for creating this?

JVR: No, that was created in the California office. I believe David Crane was responsible for that and he just passed it around for other programmers to put into their own games.

TD: Warren Robinett secretly hid his name within **Adventure** (by Atari). Are there any "Easter eggs" in any of your games?

JVR: I never hid my initials or my name in any of my games. With all the companies I've ever worked with, I've been given credit for designing or porting or adapting almost every game I've ever done. I've never really felt any need to do that.

TD: Well, in Warren's case, it was the late 1970s and the designers were not given credit. When you were with Activision, did you work from home as well?

JVR: No, I worked in the New Jersey office.

TD: Do you work out of home for Absolute Entertainment?

JVR: I freelance for Absolute. I was one of the founders of Absolute Entertainment. I worked there for a few years, left, and sold my ownership in the company. I've been doing stuff on my own ever since. However, I have done a lot of work for them independently.

TD: Are there any classic games that you liked to play back then?

JVR: Back then, my favorite game was **Megamania** (by Activision).

TD: Do you still have any classic systems?

JVR: Yes, I have a pretty big collection. I have an Atari 7800 that I use once in a while. One of the perks of working for Activision was that when I first came there, they gave me every single game that the company made. While I was working there, every time a new game was released, I was given a free copy. All programmers had this "bonus."

TD: Are you the programmer that beat all the Activision games and owns all the club patches? (Note: The **HERO** manual states John belongs to almost every Activision club.)

JVR: I didn't beat every one. The one that I got started on and got me addicted to the whole videogame business was **Skiing** (by Activision). Years ago, at a local store, there was a contest for **Skiing** and **Laser Blast** (by Activision). I took part in that, went and bought **Skiing** and my brother and I would compete. It was really strange because I was really into it. And around a year later, all of a sudden I was working for Activision making games! This was strange, especially considering the

company was in California and I was in New Jersey.

TD: That's good timing...

JVR: It was the whole thing with the part-time job while I was in college. I met all these people who were into hand-held games and they also wanted to get into videogames. One thing lead to another...



Van Ryzin is also the designer of Activision's *Cosmic Commuter*.

TD: Do you have any favorite games on the newer systems?

JVR: In my spare time, I like playing arcade games more than I like playing the home games. I'm at home programming the home games all day long. I like playing the arcade games because I feel like I'm getting some experience more than the home games. In the arcade, my favorite these days is the virtual racing game. I can play that game all day long...

TD: By the end of the work day, do you find yourself so sick of videogames that you just want to turn everything off or do you find yourself playing games in your spare time?

JVR: It depends. When I get to the end of a project, I work a lot of hours. It's really intense. When I'm going through this phase, I really have no energy left towards it. Sometimes I just want to do something that doesn't have anything to do with it—just to change my train of thought. Then, I come back fresh. But in a normal time period, I can work all day long and then go to the arcade at night with my nephew and play arcade games for a few hours. It has to be something different—as opposed to sitting in front of a game system, which I do all day long.

TD: Where were any other 2600 games that you did that were never released? There was talk about some unreleased games by Activision, and little is known about them. I've talked to some other Activision programmers...supposedly **Zenji** was going to be released. Do you know of any games that were close to completion, but were never released?

JVR: Yes, there was a lot of that. You'd be amazed by how much of that happened. In the peak of the Atari 2600 days, Activision was very concerned about their image. They would only release games that were really good. If a game didn't live up to their reputation, Activision had no desire to release it. **Cosmic Commuter** is a perfect example. I finished that game in the peak of the industry, when the 2600 was really hot stuff. Activision felt that it didn't measure up. They decided not to release it then. That was really disappointing for me—I finally got a job with a this big, successful company. I write a game, work like crazy to do it, get to the end, and then they decide that they don't want to publish it! It probably took me nine months to write that game. So then I wrote **HERO**. They thought **HERO** did measure up and they released it. Six months to a year later, they decided to release **Cosmic Commuter**.

There were lots of games that the company was not thrilled with. Activision opened up a number of design centers where all the people who worked there wrote games. Then Activision would say that they didn't like any of the games. Those games were not released, and then the design center would be shut down. There were some guys from the Boston design center that wrote a couple of games that were pretty good, and Activision never released them. I only wrote two for the 2600...

TD: Did you have any ideas for games that never saw the light of day?

JVR: I always have more ideas for games than finished games. It's a lot easier to have an idea than to actually go through all the work to actually create a game.

TD: How are programming games today different than programming games when you first started?

JVR: Today, I work on my own, but I really don't. I have my own

consulting company. I am capable of creating an entire game myself, but time-wise, it is impractical. I must have other people help me do it. I hire a consultant to do the music, a consultant to do some or most of the graphics, someone who writes the program with me...that kind of thing. In the "olden" days, I could do the whole game myself. I did this for a long time, even beyond the Atari 2600. You just can't compete today in that way. With the complexity of the games, the amount of detail in the graphics, and the depth of sound effects and music in today's games, there's no way I could do it myself. I could, but it would take so long that by the time it was finished, that particular game system wouldn't probably be selling.

TD: Have you programmed any games on the computer platforms—IBM or Macintosh?

JVR: No, I haven't. I'm interested in doing that, though. I find multimedia computers to be interesting.

TD: What are you doing now?

JVR: I work out of my home and have my own consulting company called Panoramic Software. I am almost finished with an original game for the Super Nintendo and the Sega Genesis called *Hellfire Run*.

TD: What's the process in receiving payment for creating a game?

JVR: Basically, third party game companies hire me to create a game. They pay me an advance and royalties on the game.

TD: Was it like this 10 years ago?

JVR: No, I was an employee and it was just a salary and a bonus.

TD: Where do you see the gaming industry heading five or ten years from now?

JVR: I think creating games is going to become more like a job of manipulating databases that already exist. As I said before, when I create a game, I now hire a musician and a graphic artist. I don't see this being very realistic five years from now. I think I'll have to take existing information from something else—for example—from a movie. I'll be taking all the sound effects, film clips, music, etc. and turning that into a game. Creating it from scratch at the level games seem to be going towards will not be enough. The only people who will be able to create the special effects that will be required in a game will be the people in a movie studio. I won't be able to create that stuff because I'm not a Hollywood studio.

The virtual reality polygon world has a lot to offer, too. I could create virtual reality games myself by "purchasing" data, or objects to put into 3-D worlds. Instead of creating the data, programmers will be

acquiring it from somewhere else...

**John Van Ryzin's
Softwareology**

Apple II (all published by Hayden Software)
Kamikaze
Shuttle Intercept
Bellhop

Atari 2600 (all by Activision)
Cosmic Commuter
Hero

Commodore 64
The Complete Fireworks Construction Set (Activision)
X-15 Alpha Mission
F-18 Homet (Absolute Entertainment)

Atari 7800
F-18 Homet (Absolute Entertainment)

Nintendo
Heavy Shreddin' (Parker Brothers)
Space Shuttle Project (Absolute Entertainment)

Super Nintendo
Race Drivin'
Steel Talons (Tengen)

Nintendo Game Boy
Ren & Stimpy Veediots! (T*HO)
Super Battletank (Absolute Entertainment)

Sega Game Gear
Super Battletank (Absolute Entertainment)

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Westport, MA 02790

NAME THAT GAME CONTEST WINNER

To say that DP readers want to see this game "named" would be an understatement. We received over thirty titles for the contest run in DP #20 to name the game that US Games never truly got around to doing. Here is a list of some runner-up entries:

Davey Jones' Locker
We're Getting Soaked (In Debt)
We're Too Lazy and Uninspired to Name This Ourselves
Submarine Defender
Coastau's Challenge
The Programmer Quit Before He Named This Game, But We Still Wanted To Make A Quick Buck Anyway
Octopussy: A Journey into Pus
Ocean Escape
Hook Me Up With Some Air, Bro

But the winner with our judges was **GOING UNDER**, by Russ Perry Jr. Russ stated correctly that this not only fits the game but also the state of affairs for US Games (as well as most videogame developers) at the time. The title **GOING UNDER** will appear in all future DP references to this game. Congratulations, Russ - we owe you a prize since you already have a lifetime subscription. We could give you a second one in the event you're reincarnated as a videogamer ...

Michael Jackson MOONWALKER

Genesis

Sega

Platform



**GLOVE, GAME
REVIEW
SUPPLIED BY JOE
SANTULLI**

Element	Joe	Kevin	Bill	Karl	Liz	Howie	Simultaneous Multi-Play	Saves Data to Cart
Graphics	7	5	8	7	8	9	Significant Game Ending	Hidden Areas
Sound	9	6	10	6	8	9	Variable Skill Levels	Non-Linear Gameplay
Gameplay	6	7	8	5	7	8		
Overall	7	6	8	6	7	8		

Remember when Michael Jackson was a respected performer whose name was golden? Picture the time when MJ was at his peak and a videogame would actually be released with his name on it. Hard to imagine today, isn't it?

The truth is, this early Genesis title has held up pretty well over the years. I'm not a fan of platform games, but Moonwalker is done pretty well. The control is tight and the music is excellent. Still - even for the time it was released - it's missing something. Actually, it's missing quite a bit. For one thing, the stages are incredibly repetitive, particularly when you have to negotiate that "Stage 1-1, 1-2, 1-3" etc. business. Staging in this manner makes me think the developer got lazy. You're

telling the player right up front that you're going to offer him three variations of the same level. The same tables. The same gravestones. Whatever. I'd rather have eight stages that are longer but completely different from each other.

I wasn't crazy about the "enemies" in this game. There are gangsters, thugs, and zombies. A few robots near the end of the game. but that's all. It's pretty boring smashing on the same suits level after level. I think this goes back to the laziness thing. What do you think?

The music is this game's saving grace. Despite the fact that Michael Jackson's number one hits have been scaled down to 16-bit computer variations, they're remarkably close to the backgrounds of their respective

songs. "Billie Jean" is the best, it sounds almost exactly like the real thing but without Michael's lyrics.

This would have been a "10" in the sound department if not for the lack of game sounds themselves. When MJ attacks, there's a little "twinkle" sound, you can make him go "woo!" (not recommended if you want to maintain your sanity!), and there's a way-off "thwack" sound when a gun is fired or MJ throws a punch. That "thwack" is used far too often.

Laziness again.

So the bottom line is the game is OK and fun for awhile until the tedious action wears you out. It's not a hard game by any stretch of the imagination. If you're an MJ fan, play it while he can still show his face in public!

The gameplay is a bit on the repetitive side. No big thrills here... there are a lot of little kids running around, which is funny considering MJ's recent state of affairs.



YOUNGMAN



OLENIACZ

Although a bit outdated, it still holds up well (gameplay-wise) against the more current releases in this genre. I grew tired of MJ's howls and screams almost immediately.

Collector Notes

SOME HAVE SPECULATED THAT THIS MAY BE A COLLECTOR'S ITEM SOMEDAY, BUT IT WAS MASS PRODUCED WHEN RELEASED. HARD TO FIND NEW, BUT A GOOD DEAL FOR \$19.90 USED AT EITHER FUNCO OR ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE.

Power Users

GREAT GAME GENIE CODES:

AXST-AA81 - Infinite Lives
JATA-DA5C - Each child found
RESTORES full power

Origin

THE GAME IS BASED ON SEVERAL Michael Jackson songs and videos, most notably Thriller, Bad, and Billie Jean. THE GAME ITSELF IS A GENERIC platformer.

THE THREE STOOGES

NES

Activision

Multi-Game



**SLAPSTICK
REVIEW BY JOE
SANTULLI**

For generations now, The Three Stooges have been entertaining television addicts with their black and white slapstic antics. Moe, Larry, and Curly mini-movies are classics in the world of comedy, and Activision did a fair job of translating their special chemistry into a home game for the Nintendo 8-bit system. The game was released several years ago, but we still find ourselves yanking it from the stack from time to time.

The Nintendo cartridge was ported over from the P/C version of the same game, and surprisingly accurately (I've played the C-64 version as well). This is one of those "games within a game"-style carts, a tradition that began back in the early 1980's when Gorf by Bally/Midway impressed gamers with variations of Space Invaders, Galaxian, and threw in some new stuff as well. More recently,

Element	Joe	Kevin	Bill	Karl	Liz	Howie	Simultaneous Multi-Play	Saves Data to Cart
Graphics	9	?	6	7	8	9	Significant Game Ending	Hidden Areas
Sound	9	?	7	6	9	9	Variable Skill Levels	Non-Linear Gameplay
Gameplay	8	?	7	7	8	9		
Overall	9	?	6	7	8	9		

Jurassic Park Interactive for the 3DO was released with the same concept. The Three Stooges is another example. Each game you'll play actually consists of six mini-games. They are: Cracker Eating Contest (try to guide Curly's hand over the bowl of soup, grabbing crackers before the oysters below get them all), Help Wanted: Doctors (guide the Stooges quickly through a busy hospital), Help Wanted: Waiters (a pie-throwing contest), The Boxing Match (a side-scrolling run and jump contest featuring Larry), The Slapping Game (Moe must poke, kick, and slap the other two as much as possible in the allotted time), and Trivia.

Fortunately, there isn't a dud amongst these six games, and they're all tied in rather neatly by a board game-style layout that sort of lets you select from one of these. I say sort of because the

selector is a large hand that rapidly moves across the spaces on the board. Pressing the button stops the hand.

There are other spaces on the board besides the mini-games, and they include money (ultimately, you must make \$5000 to win), loss of money, "chance" squares which contain one of the other squares (you can't tell which), or a mouse trap. If you hit four mouse traps in the game, you're through.

So you see, there are quite a few game elements here. It's never boring. The graphics are done surprisingly well although some of the large-screen depictions of the Stooges are a bit low-res. The sound is perfect, containing little sound bites right from the films.

Any chowder-head that owns an NES should own The Three Stooges game, too.

While I couldn't save the orphanage, it was sointainly fun to try. Nyuk, Nyuk, Nyuk. Some areas of the game could have been more forgiving.



L Hirsch



L Santulli

I'm not really crazy about the Three Stooges on television, but the game was easy to learn and fun to play.

Collector Notes

You can get this game (currently) for \$7.90 at Funco, and it's likely that the same low prices can even be found if you see the game new. Well worth the money at twice that price.

Power Users

The Slapping Game slows down the hand pointer, so make sure you get to do it once in awhile. Don't mess with the different moves - just a simple punch to Curly, turn, punch Larry, turn, etc. works fine!

Origin

This game originally appeared on the Commodore 64 and Atari ST. Each of the mini-games mimic an episode of the Three Stooges TV show.

John Madden Football

3DO

Electronic Arts

Sports



BY JOE "DROP
BACK AND PUNT"
SANTULLI

It doesn't take a genius to know that John Madden Football is one of the most successful licenses in the history of video games. It all began when Madden, then coach of the Oakland Raiders, signed a deal with CBS Games for an Atari 2600 title called *Maddness*. An auspicious debut, since the game was never commercially released! Since then, it has been smooth sailing for the color commentator and his videogame career.

Each improvement in the Madden series makes the last one obsolete, and this is no exception. Moving Madden onto the 3DO platform only makes you wonder how you ever settled for the Genesis version. Not that it's perfect - it's far from it - but it reaches a level of realism that football videogames have never done before.

The most obvious improvement is the

Element	Joe	Kevin	Bill	Karl	Liz	Howie
Graphics	9	8	9	10	?	?
Sound	7	8	9	9	?	?
Gameplay	8	9	8	10	?	?
Overall	8	8	9	10	?	?

Simultaneous Multi-Play	Saves Data to Cart
Significant Game Ending	Hidden Areas
Variable Skill Levels	Non-Linear Gameplay

graphics, which feature photo-realistic players inside of a highly detailed stadium. The camera pans around and zooms on the instant replay to show a variety of angles never before possible. There are some limitations here. For example, all of the players still look identical, and there are no numbers on their jerseys to separate one from another during the play. Also, the players running around looks strange, almost as if their feet are moving faster than they should be... or maybe it's that they're only taking baby steps instead of huge strides... whatever it is, it's noticeable.

That's about where the criticism ends. This game presents you with most of the options of previous Madden games (still no season mode!) up to '94. You can compete in a playoff series, set weather conditions, and in this version you can

check out scouting reports on each team which also contains full-motion video clips of some truly spectacular plays. The announcer is careful not to mention any of the players by name, however, since this Madden also doesn't have the players' endorsement.

There is some interesting attention to detail in this game! Check out the running game, where you can dodge, stiff-arm, and hurtle the opposition. It looks terrific, and REAL. Sometimes you'll see an arm reach up out of a pile and grab the ball carrier by the foot, tripping him up.

Madden lends his voice once again, but the clips are longer this time. I would have preferred more variety, but then again, you can always turn this feature off.

Another excellent addition to both the Madden series and the 3DO library.

After NHL Hockey '94 for Sega CD, this is the next best sports game available. I can't think of anything that would make gameplay better, but I'd like to see a season mode next.



Great game, but the movement of the players takes some getting used to. I'd like to see this game for Sega CD next. 3DO is the platform of the future!

Collector Notes

If you're thinking of buying a 3DO soon, look for a chain that's including John Madden Football as one of the pack-ins. Software Etc. is doing this right now, but there are others. A worthy investment.

Power Users

USE YOUR AUDIBLES! THE COMPUTER DEFENSE IS SMART AND WILL COVER YOU WELL. WHEN YOU SEE THEM MOVE IN CLOSE, SWITCH TO A PASSING AUDIBLE AND GO DEEP!

Origin

THE FIRST MADDEN FOOTBALL WAS FOR THE GENESIS. IT FEATURED PLAYOFFS AND EXHIBITION ONLY, AN INCREDIBLY DUMB COMPUTER OPPONENT, AND VERY FEW OF THE BELLS AND WHISTLES (I.E. THE TAPE MEASURE ON NEAR-1ST DOWNS) WE'VE COME TO EXPECT FROM THIS SERIES.

Star Trek

Atari 5200

Sega

Arcade



**WARP FACTOR
FIVE, MR.
OLENIACZ**

Element	Joe	Kevin	Bill	Karl	Liz	Howie
Graphics	4	5	7	?	5	7
Sound	5	4	6	?	5	6
Gameplay	5	7	6	?	5	6
Overall	5	5	6	?	5	7

Simultaneous Multi-Play	Saves Data to Cart
Significant Game Ending	Hidden Areas
Variable Skill Levels	Non-Linear Gameplay

Star Trek is perhaps the most beloved science fiction series of all time (in constant competition with the Star Wars saga). Long before Sega entertained gamers with the Genesis and Master System, they brought home the game that had Trekkies banging away at a *Star Trek* simulation in the arcades.

Besides familiar foes and space hazards, the game bears little resemblance to any of the television shows. The object is to hop from sector to sector and destroy NOMAD, an alien robotic force bent on sending the Enterprise off with a one way ticket to oblivion. The playfield is split up threefold. The smallest section displays your score, shields remaining, photon weapons (which pulverize enemies directly in front of the Enterprise) remaining, and available warp drive power.

The next section is the window which displays the action (via an overhead view).

You are alerted to oncoming Klingon Birds of Prey which depending on their color, will either ram or shoot at you or the starbase in that sector. Docking with one of these starbases replenishes your shields, photons, and warp drive power, but avoiding this pitstop altogether awards a handsome bonus. If random anti-matter saucers collide with the Enterprise, your warp drive energy is sucked dry. The bottom of the screen is consumed by a close-up view of whatever objects are in line with the Enterprise.

There are a total of ten sectors containing six rounds each. Four of these rounds involve combat with Klingons. Navigating through asteroid fields or meteor showers while stockpiling supplies from starbases is always the round three objective. The final round pits you against NOMAD. You face it without your photons, relying on cunning and accurate phaser fire to remove it

before it removes you. Destroy NOMAD and you advance to the next sector.

If you were thrilled with the challenge in the arcade, you'd be satisfied (for the most part) with this version. All of the essential elements are intact, although the actual onscreen portion of the playfield which houses the action seems very confined and visually unimpressive. The sounds themselves are no more than a few blips and explosions. The Atari 5200 is certainly capable of an adequate duplication of the limited speech from the arcade (proven in their conversion of *Berzerk*), but it's absent in this game. Graphically, the sprites are not very crisp and are rather void of detail.

In some respects Sega's 5200 endeavor is a fair rendition of the arcade classic, but in comparison to other 5200 titles *Star Trek* is quite bland and is an otherwise weak title, even for Trek fans.

The 5200 stick causes you to spin around and around in this weak translation. If you're stick isn't self centering, don't bother with this game!



J. Santulli



L. Santulli

It seems like you only need to look at one of the three boxes to be any good at this game. The rest of the screen is a waste of space.

Collector Notes

The DP Guide 3 value is listed at \$10. The Atari 2600 version is listed as \$12, and the ColecoVision at \$20. This is the cheapest, but also least enjoyable - pass on it and get the 2600 version instead.

Power Users

Destroy starbases early to stock up on supplies, as up to 127 shield and photons can be stored. In later rounds, avoid the starbases to rack up points.

Origin

Based loosely on the *Star Raiders* theme, the original *Star Trek* game was an arcade favorite in the early 80's

MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH-OUT! NINTENDO, FOR NES

7-8-9-10... Knock out! Mike Tyson's Punch-Out! delivers that knock-out blow. You assume the role of Little Mac, a 17-year old street fighter from the Bronx, and try to take on 13 (10 different) roughnecks from around the world. Beat all of them, then you get one shot in the dream bout against Mike Tyson. This game has all of the elements required for a great game: incredible graphics, good controls, good animation, and replay value - it just keeps you coming back for more! Each match lasts up to three rounds, and at the beginning you opponent will usually try to intimidate you by showing off. Soda Popinski even laughs at you! There is no pause in this game (and rightfully so) so the only break you'll get is at the end of a round. This is when your trainer will give you valuable advice and your opponent will usually taunt you. I could go on and on about this game, but the bottom line is that it belongs in every NES library: In my humble opinion, this is one of the top 3 NES games ever made. I can only hope the upcoming Super Punch-Out! will be at least as good as this one.

- Edward Villalpando



ALIEN

20TH CENTURY FOX, FOR ATARI 2600

Fox's highly intense, gut-wrenching film captivated audiences. I was expecting the intensity to carry over via a shooter or a platform game. Instead, programmer Dallas North suddenly lost his sense of creativity and opted to produce a clone of Pac-Man (touting a flame thrower) complete with warp tunnels and random bonus items. Aliens and pulsars replace Pac-Man's familiar ghosts and power pellets, respectively. A bonus round is added, where one must move in a straight line to the top of the screen (note: reminiscent of Activision's Freeway) to a prize while avoiding rows of travelling aliens.

The highly anticipated 2600 Pac-Man was a huge bust, but Alien - when compared side-by-side - is the superior offering. The blend of colors is eye-pleasing and the game itself is enjoyable. However, the negative points, including mediocre graphics, unvaried maze arrangements, and an annoying siren which wails constantly knock the game down a few pegs. If you're hopelessly addicted to these maze games, give Alien a try.

-Kevin Oleniacz



HOME ALONE 2 T*HQ, FOR SUPER NES

Somewhere, in a darkened corner of the world lies a game company that sacrifices customers for a fast buck, yet continues to do business. How is this possible? Although I made a personal vow to never, never (did I mention never?) do a TH*Q game review, Home Alone 2 was irresistible because it not only typifies the mediocre movie-to-game movement that's sweeping videogame developers, but also typifies T*HQ

programming. In what is basically a platform game with no platforms, a shooting game with no guns, and an adventure game with no sense of adventure, Home Alone 2 barely even taps the system's capabilities. The opening music sounds like the movie theme played on a Casio Home Organ. The graphics... well, suffice to say that it's extremely 2-dimensional. The gameplay, while not awful, could have used a bit of work. I mean, what's the point in having a full screen of graphics if you can only move around in the bottom half? Little Kevin (and he really is little) is SO small in relation to everything, which is fine - but couldn't they have made everything - including Kevin - larger so the whole screen gets utilized? I didn't enjoy this game, and wonder if even the sappiest of Home Alone 2 fans would.

- Joe Santulli



T2: THE ARCADE GAME LJN, FOR SUPER NES

Released long after the Genesis version (we reviewed that one back in issue #9!), I didn't expect T2 to be as good as it is. It is good. It's definitely better than the Genesis version. Much of the arcade game that was missing in the Genesis version has been reunited on the SNES, and is also compatible with the Super Scope and the SNES Mouse. Both of the alternate methods of control are improvements over the standard pad, which feel a little "draggy" here. The backgrounds are rich with the kind of blood-red sky that brings the movie to life. Arnold is looking good in his many incarnations, too! I still have a problem with level three where you have to protect a truck from the cyborgs, but the rest of the game is fair and challenging, more fun with two players. For fans of the movie, shooting game fans, or anyone else who just likes to watch robots lose their heads, check out this edition of the T2 legacy.

- Joe Santulli



TOWERING INFERNO US GAMES, FOR ATARI 2600

Remember the dramatic star-studded disaster flicks of the '70's? *Towering Inferno* for the 2600 captures the essence of the film bearing the same name.

Via an overhead view, rescue up to four victims on each floor of a fiery nine story structure. Hose down animated flames called "flameoids" or battle walls of fire which break up into several flameoids. Touch one and lose one of your four lives. All of the victims are clustered together behind a white window at the far end of the room. Options include solo or competitive play, and varied points of continuation upon conclusion.

The visuals are definitely not first class material, although the flickering flames are a treat. The sound effect of fire rippling throughout the structure is convincing. The intense and highly addictive gameplay overshadows any aesthetic shortcomings as well as somewhat repetitious play mechanics. I wish a co-op version were built in, but with the 2600's limited memory I feel U.S. Games had done a commendable job. Undoubtedly a "sleeper" classic.

- Kevin Oleniacz



A RUN-DOWN OF NON-THEME RELATED GAMES THAT HAVE BEEN IN OUR SYSTEMS LATELY

ROAD RASH ELECTRONIC ARTS, FOR 3DO

I've been a Road Rash fan since the first game released in 1991. It was Electronic Arts' first decent non-sports game for the Genesis, and for that system, it still rules. Even Road Rash II, released a year and a half later, was not a significant improvement (a two player split-screen with degraded graphics & sloppy controls). This game goes far beyond not only the already fantastic Genesis version, but beyond any 3DO title to date. The incredible graphics are even more amazing when you watch them at 150 mph and those lush backgrounds dash by you effortlessly. Even with eight other bikers, a few cars, and dozens of obstacles on the screen all at once, the control never suffers - it's absolutely incredible. Did Electronic Arts stop with the basic game? No, they added in all kinds of bells and whistles: FMV intros and event intermissions, full rock soundtrack including Soundgarden, Paw, Swervedriver, and others, two modes of play, a few music videos... there's even more to rave about when you actually play the game. Suffice to say this is the best game I've played this year. A TEN.

- Joe Santulli



WOLFENSTEIN 3-D ATARI, FOR JAGUAR

There are two ways of thinking. One is to say that Wolfenstein 3D is an incredible game of carnage, action and nail-biting, shoot-em up, first-person suspense. The other is to say it's been done before and the Jaguar should be doing much more. I'm in the latter-thinking bracket. People have been complaining to me for years that the CD systems are nothing more than an excuse to port over PC games and slightly improved cartridge games. I'm complaining beyond that - this is a 64 bit machine, capable of so much more than we've seen so far - and releasing a game like Wolfenstein 3D is just plain laziness. If you're going to produce a game that's substandard for the platform you're selling it on, you'd better make some major improvements. Yes, the graphics are very sharp - but the characters still look the same as the PC game. Why not "real" looking antagonists? The sound and music are pretty good, definitely better than the PC... but nowhere even remotely close to Tempest 2000's killer soundtrack. If you've never played nor have access to the cheaper PC version, Wolfenstein 3D is at least worth playing - but hold out if you can for Aliens Vs. Predator, a far superior game (if Atari ever gets it released)!

- Joe Santulli



STREETS OF RAGE 3 SEGA, FOR GENESIS

Like Road Rash, Streets of Rage has been a time-honored

tradition with my wife and I. Nothing beats a good simultaneous-player action game, and SOR3 delivers. I'll tell you right now that the improvements between SOR2 and SOR3 aren't nearly as dramatic as those from SOR to SOR2 (got all that?), but they're noticeable. If you're not familiar with the previous games, get this one! If you are, here are some selling points: better graphics, especially in the enemy characters; choice of six characters over SOR2's four (although two of them require a trick to play); six-button controller functionality; power-up of special moves; return of the elevator from the original (there's nothing better than heaving a baddie right off of the screen); several "special" levels (i.e. in one you must break through walls while fending off a bulldozer, and in another you must disable two computers before a timer runs down); and multiple endings. It's a lot of fun to play - definitely the best of the three to date - but still room for improvement. For one thing the game needs more mini-bosses and less thugs. It gets tiresome late in the game when you face the same opponent for the umpteenth time. I'd also do away with the Skate character and bring back Max. Yuzo Koshiro's music is hit and miss on this game, too. I think the original SOR had the best soundtrack of the lot. Even so, this is a great game, especially for two.

- Joe Santulli



WAY OF THE WARRIOR UNIVERSAL, FOR 3DO

WOW is more than just a way to shorten this game's title - it's also the word most everyone will say when they play this game on a HOME system. Way of the Warrior by Universal is a hybrid fighting game that will instantly appear to be a Mortal Kombat rip-off, but play the game for awhile and you'll find much more. Besides the fatalities and lightning-fast action, WOW has level-specific fatalities (like Eternal Champions), "skull points" that you gain which can be converted into magic spells, power-ups randomly dropped from the sky, and secrets that we don't even know about yet (rumor has it that there are 14-20 playable characters, hidden rooms, a four-player mode, and a "game within the game" that isn't even a fighting contest, but none of this has been confirmed).

Something I didn't know at the Summer CES was that the background music was to be supplied by White Zombie. All of the demos I had played were music-less, which was my main concern... but WOW! White Zombie?!? I listen to their music all of the time, and now those tunes are built into a game.

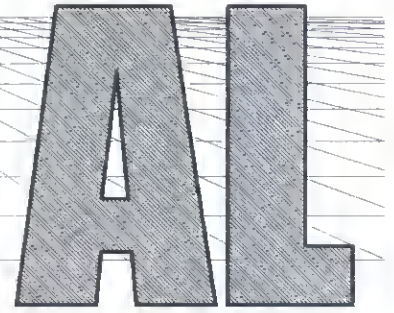
The graphics are nearly Kombat quality, although the animation appears to have suffered at the hands of additional moves. It's not very noticeable, but because the screen zooms in and out (like Samurai Shodown), the jerky motions can become amplified on the larger view. Even so, you can see facial expressions. That's how detailed the graphics are. I'd tell you more but I'm in the mood for sending an opponent through the floor of "The Roof", so I can look down and see his bloody remains. Sick - but oh, so much fun.

- Joe Santulli





The Wacky World of



THE TEN BEST AND WORST VIDEOGAME ENDORSEMENTS

by Al Backiel

It seems like a good marketing strategy. You have a game or an idea for a game. Why not get a superstar to endorse it? Many times they pitch in with excellent suggestions which may improve the game dramatically. The name value of the celebrity alone will prompt similar ones of that type. There is nothing wrong with that logic. It seems like a good idea until something goes wrong in that celebrity's personal or professional life. Heroes have "feet of clay", it seems. One just has to check out the latest headlines to find this to be true. It got me to thinking.

Here are my nominations for the 10 best and 10 worst celebrity endorsements of a video game (in no particular order). May I have the envelope, please?

THE TEN WORST ENDORSEMENTS

1) *James "Buster" Douglas Knockout Boxing* (Genesis) - Not to take anything away from his stunning upset of Mike Tyson, but he was unable to defend the title even once. So, it turns out that on the basis of one fight he got his own game cartridge. Perhaps Sega got caught up in the moment?

2) *Evander Holyfield's "Real Deal" Boxing* (Genesis & Game Gear) - His cart should be a real deal now that he's lost the heavyweight title twice and recently retired due to a heart condition. Most of his victories weren't very impressive. Perhaps he shouldn't have tried to move up in weight class.

3) *Mike Tyson's Punch-Out Boxing!* (NES) - I'm not disputing his boxing credentials here. Mike Tyson is arguably the most dominant heavyweight of our time. Unfortunately, his professional career has been overshadowed by his personal life. Frequent brushes with the law, a stormy (abusive?) marriage to Robin Givens, and finally a rape conviction resulting in a prison sentence doesn't exactly make for a "model" endorsement. Tyson's name was eventually dropped and the game reverted back to its original title - *Punch-Out! Boxing*.

4) *Nigel Mansell's World Championship Racing* (NES/Genesis/Game Boy) - The name may be popular in Europe or somewhere else. But in the U.S., the only reaction you're going to get is "Nigel who? What does he do? Never heard of him." Totally wasted money on royalties. Nigel is attempting Indy-style racing in contrast to the European Formula 1 circuit.

5) *Magic Johnson's Fast Break* (NES) - It was probably a "fast break" that got him in trouble in the first place. He stunned the world by announcing his retirement due to the fact that he had contracted AIDS. He has admitted to numerous sexual encounters with female groupies. Last I heard he will be returning as a coach.

6) *Michael Jackson's Moonwalker* (Genesis) - Without a doubt one of the most dynamic and talented performers of all time. The trouble is that his career may have suffered irreparable damage due to allegations of child molestation and rumors of payoffs of hush money. Ironically, the game had MJ as a sort of "big brother" rescuing children from bad guys. Maybe Lisa Marie will stabilize the Michael Jackson image once more.

7) *Pete Rose Baseball* (2600/7800) - Pete Rose is definitely Hall of Fame material - he is, after all, Major League Baseball's all-time hit leader. He may have messed up his chances due to his dismissal from baseball as a result of gambling incidents. Allegedly some of these sports bets involved his own team.



Bo Jackson's career hasn't exactly sizzled since he hit the top (shown here after striking out four times in one game).

8) *Bo Jackson's Baseball and Football* (Game Boy) - What a guy! Able to play two sports and excel at both. That was, until the hip injury derailed his career. Now Bo even knows the inside of a hospital. He is attempting a baseball comeback with a hip replacement. We'll have to see what he can do as a bionic man. I have nothing against Bo personally, but since his football career is over, the two-sport idea looks like a bad one in retrospect. I must confess, I had trouble with the game concept as well. Wouldn't the coding of the football portion have to suffer to fit in the baseball and vice versa?

9) *Jennifer Capriati Tennis* (Genesis) - The youngest person to win a Wimbledon title. This teenager is from the same generation as those who look up to her as a role model. Too bad, she has run afoul of the law and is now facing charges for shoplifting and possession of marijuana.

10) *John Elway's Quarterback* (NES) - A capable QB who was able to lead the Broncos to two Super Bowls. They lost both, one by one of the most lopsided scores in NFL history. Like Jim Kelly of the Bills, fate has not been kind when it comes down to the big game.

THE TEN BEST ENDORSEMENTS

1) *Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing* (Genesis) - A living legend of the ring. "The Greatest". One of the most popular names in the entire world.

2) *George Foreman's K.O. Boxing* (Genesis, SNES, Game Gear) - He's so likeable, I can't help voting for him. You have to appreciate someone who's a real character (all five of his sons are named George). He doesn't worry about his age, weight, or hair loss.

3) *Joe Montana NFL Football* (series) (Genesis, Sega CD) - One of the greatest quarterbacks of all time. He has performed so many come-from-behind victories it's almost as if he wanted to make the games interesting. You could never count the 'Niners out, no matter what the score. Many championships under his belt and possibly more to follow with KC.

4) *Jordan vs. Bird One-on-One* (NES, Genesis) - OK, so Michael retired from basketball. I think that once he stops chasing his baseball dream, he'll return. Any team would be interested in his services. He quit while at the top of his game. Look for another Jordan title involving basketball but (not the game itself) soon.

5) *Arnold Palmer Tournament Golf* (Genesis) - One of golf's legendary players, many championships were won by Arnie. His devoted followers are known as "Arnie's Army". I believe he's still an active player on the senior circuit. Designed many famous golf courses himself.

6) *John Madden Football* (series) (Genesis, SNES, 3DO) - The old coach can be obnoxious at times, but you have to respect his knowledge of the game. As a color commentator he has tons of anecdotes and is able to dissect the strategies involved over the course of a game.

7) *Pele's Championship Soccer* (2600) - Probably the greatest soccer player of all time. I thought surely he deserved more than having his name on an early, primitive 2600 soccer game... then POOF! A new Pele game appeared for Super NES and Genesis.



A classic picture - two endorsements the game companies would rather forget (Mike Tyson, James "Buster" Douglas).

8) *Charles Barkley's Shut Up and Jam* (Genesis, Game Gear) - Hey, it might be refreshing to see someone with an attitude like Sir Charles get their own game. Got a problem with that? I didn't think so.

9) *Walter Payton Football* (SMS) - The most productive running back in the history of the NFL. In 1984 Payton broke Jim Brown's all-time rushing record and went on to gain a total of 16,726 yards. A two-time MVP who got "da Bears" to the Super Bowl.

10) *Pat Riley Basketball* (Genesis) - It looked like another bad move for awhile because he announced his retirement soon after the cart was released. Before he started pushing cars, he compiled an impressive record as coach of the Lakers. He's now coaching the (almost world champions) Knicks.

Honorable Mentions: *Ken Griffey Jr Baseball* (SNES), *Chavez* (SNES), *Roger Clemens Baseball* (SNES), *Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball* (Genesis), *Nolan Ryan Baseball* (SNES), *Mario Andretti Racing* (Genesis), *Reggie Jackson Baseball* (SMS).

That's it for the ten best & worst. Nintendo & Sega seem to have called a truce in getting the endorsement of the heavyweight champ-of-the-moment. Perhaps something like Buster Douglas' cart may still be worth owning due to the short shelf life and potential scarcity. Some of the games on the worst list (i.e. Moonwalker, Punch-Out!) still reached their sales potential before the image problems came about.



WHAT WE'VE GOT HERE IS A FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE

I'm baaack!! After missing my deadline last issue, I'm back with loads of stuff to bitch about this time around. So much, in fact, that I'm going to try and tackle three issues in this column. So with lots to say and limited space, let's get it on!

ATARI CORP FILES FOR BANKRUPTCY

Well not yet, but I'm going to go ahead and make my personal

prediction public here : by June of 1995, Atari will be out of business. After what I expect to be a slow Christmas season for them and a few feeble efforts the following spring, they will throw in the towel before what is the slowest selling season of the year for videogames.

The cause of death on their death certificate will be listed as

self-destruction with Sega's 32X and/or Saturn contributing factors. Before they went ahead and developed a new system, someone should have told the folks at Atari to pull down all the 1981 calendars around the office and remind them that they are not the king of the hill anymore. They have been strolling along as if Nintendo & Sega didn't exist and even as if *theirs* was the leading system and other companies were the ones that needed to catch up!

I've got news for them, however painful it may be to hear - the 2600 doesn't mean jack to most gamers today. Atari is a newcomer today - a third or fourth choice system. In order for systems at the bottom of the list to move up, some killer software has to be available for it. Kids will generally choose the same type of system the majority of their friends have, unless there was something available for other systems that would make their friends envy them. By the time this happens, the 32X will be out there at 150 bucks taking a smaller chunk out of daddy's wallet at Christmas time and will not only let junior be the king of the block for a little while, but also let him keep all his regular Genesis carts to boot. Kids don't necessarily care about keeping all the old carts, but dad will most definitely remember shelling out 60-70 bucks a cart for them the Christmas' before!

Atari couldn't have done a better job of making themselves a non-factor to Sega & Nintendo. Had they released the system only a few months earlier and let developers as well as their own programmers get a better jump on the Christmas season they'd have some decent stuff available NOW. *Christmas Eve* just isn't gonna cut it for a Jaguar to be listed on some Christmas lists this year. Even the CD-ROM drive (if it shows up) isn't going to offset the fact that we STILL don't have any carts to choose from!

Now....I could be wrong in estimating how long Atari can survive without any money. They are officially in the red at the moment and freely admit that the Jaguar is their last hope. If their creditors still see the Jaguar as something that could make them money during Christmas of '95, they may stretch things out a little and see what happens next year. In my opinion, a bad showing this year will be enough to warrant pulling the plug. Stay tuned to this one - it should be interesting. Besides, if I'm wrong, Joe has promised to send a check to each and every one of you a check for 100 bucks!

HYPOCRACY GONE WILD

I'm sure many of you have been made aware of the evil pirate scum out there that is copying Atari 2600 (and other systems) games and offering them for sale both as individual cartridges as well as multi-cartridges with as many 128 games in a single cart. Certain dealers have felt threatened by such offerings and have made every attempt to both scare the copiers into not copying them, as well as the buyers into not buying them. These tactics haven't done anything to stop people from making them and have done little more than make the dealers responsible look like money-hungry scum to many of their potential customers.

There is really just one dealer in particular that is most adamant about trying to stop this, and while I'm not going to mention his name, most people are probably well aware of exactly who I'm talking about. About a week or so ago I found out some information that pretty much made me puke! The very same person that has been making such a big stink about copying games and such has been BUYING copies of cartridges - and quite a mess of them!

I was absolutely FLOORED by this fact! All the bitching and crying this person has done about people copying games and I find out he's buying them from someone who I guess he felt

nobody would know about!?! This has nothing to do with whether it's right or wrong to copy the games, but rather about someone hassling people for doing something he's doing himself!

Quite frankly, this whole issue is getting real old, real quick. People, both those doing the copying and those either buying them or not buying them, are getting damn tired of listening to the bitching and moaning.

The latest approach this person has been using is to tell people that some large company is supposedly planning on re-releasing a bunch of these old games and is refusing to do so because of the "bootlegging" of cartridges that is going on. Don't insult our intelligence!! Any company that gave this market even a little more than a passing thought would realize that it's far, FAR, too small to make any money off of when large-scale production costs are taken into consideration. Just how many classic game collectors are there out there - 500, 1000, 5000?? Five thousand is a *wild* stretch of the imagination in my opinion, but even at that many, do you see this "large company" firing up the old 2600 cartridge-making machine when even if every single collector out there bought one of their carts (another fantasy) they could only sell 5000 of them?

All this bull about other companies (such as Activision) owning the copyrights on, and I quote, "a lot" of the games from companies that went out of business has to stop too. Give me a break! This lie came about by exaggerating the fact that Activision released both Imagic and Absolute titles under their name at one point or another. I seriously doubt the existence of any Sancho, Data Age, Homevision, or ANY company's games other than Absolute's or Imagic's under Activision's belt.

What I'm curious about is just why this person has been buying up all these copies and trying to get as much information as possible on how to make them? I've seen copies of messages from him specifically asking if there are any games he's lacking that I have copies of (there are...ha!). Inquiries as to what chips are used, how to program them, and any other pertinent information have been quite common to the person I got this information from.

I also wonder what the public message looking for someone selling an EPROM burner on America On-line a little while back was all about? Could it be possible that this person is trying to acquire all the data as well as the technology so as to produce copies of games on his own? Naaahhh....it just couldn't be!

THE COPYRIGHT ISSUE

I want to express my thinking on the copyright issue and copying these games in general for everyone to see here. I'll use **Chase the Chuckwagon** by Spectravision for example purposes here. This title would generally go for around \$100 from a dealer or another collector but certain percentage of collectors either can't afford to pay that much for a game or simply refuse to shell out that kind of dough for a mediocre game just because it's hard-to-find. Spectravideo has been out of business for a long time now (and Activision does NOT own the rights to their games) so who is it that's hurt by someone being able to get a copy of the game for ten bucks? Well, certain dealers feel the value of their originals will go down because copies are available for ten bucks, but the company that made the game is no longer trying to sell it because they are out of business.

The idea that the value of originals will go down is simply ridiculous! People that want original carts in their collection will buy an original even if they already have a copy of the cart. Now if people from Spectravision resurfaced and decided to try and sell their 2600 games again, I certainly wouldn't offer copies of them because, first of all, they wouldn't sell if originals

were affordable and readily available; and second of all, that company has every right to try and make money from the games they made. Same thing goes for Cubicolor.

I am more than capable of copying it, but it would be a waste of time and Rob Fulop is still around selling it. For now though, copies of games by SpectraVision, Bomb, TechnoVision, Homevision, Dimax, among dozens of others are hurting no one.

I'm going to echo Mike Palisano's comments from last issue and take them one step further - the price gougers have ALREADY weaseled their way into this hobby! They will continue to make their mark so long as we let them. I'm definitely not one to say that certain original carts aren't worth a decent chunk of cash, but there's no need for the absolute greediness of some of these people. The whole basis for this article is the greed of one dealer in particular that's been crying and hassling people over copies of games being made while he's buying them himself! He's been writing to and calling the

various fanzine editors hassling them about taking a side (his of course) on this issue even though if they had to choose (and they don't by the way!!), he'd come out wishing he hadn't pressed the issue. The fact that he's buying copies and is seemingly preparing to offer them himself demonstrates the root of the whole problem which is nothing more than a personal problem with me in particular. I honestly couldn't care less whether this person likes me or not.

I'd suggest that whatever the problem is, he keep it a personal one and not involve other people because he's doing nothing more than make himself look bad. My position on copying these games is out in the open here and if he is actually planning on offering copies also once he has the capability, you won't see me bitching and moaning to everyone and their dog about it. Go right ahead - there's nothing wrong with it!

Everyone is entitled to their own opinion - let everyone form it on their own huh? If you don't agree with the copying of these old games - don't buy them!

JUST A REMINDER - The views offered by columnist Sean Kelly do not necessarily reflect the views of Digital Press, but damn! if they aren't usually right on the money!

Dealers Vs. Bootleggers

Last issue we asked our readers a question about how they'd feel if some import games were brought here through a consortium of businessmen. The downside is that the current bootlegging of videogames would have to end. Here's what we got...

Hmmm. Help me understand this. A consortium of businessmen wants to make money by importing foreign 2600 games. But they won't unless another consortium of businessmen stops making money by bootlegging games. Dear businessmen #1: Quit whining! I only buy original games. The 2600 market is predominantly collector-driven. Most collectors will pay \$20 for a new game with an original label. Import enough games to supply the demand and the bootleggers won't have a niche to exploit. If the games have a copyright, you'll make more money as a party in a copyright suit than by selling videogames anyway. Why is this a continuing issue with everyone? (Dale Curtis)

PAL in NTSC would be OK but since it would be redone, it should be marked as a reproduction or re-issue, clearly, on the label. Since these will be issues by the 100's or 1000's I question the cost - \$20? To duplicate eproms, cases & maybe boxes & instructions? \$9.95 or less maybe... Bootlegs undermine & destroy hobbies and won't advance the hobby except for the bootleggers. Public domain software won't make anyone any money, it won't help print newsletters either. Why some gamers are currently pursuing "free software" is somewhat of a mystery. I doubt if current owners of copyrights would favor any kind of "giveaway" that might detract from their current products. (Frank Polosky)

I'll tell you exactly what I think about the consortium of businessmen who want to bring games to the US. If they have

legitimate copyrights, the "bootlegging" (as opposed to preservation?) will not happen to their games. There's only one person I know copying games (besides the never-present Redd), and you'll note that he carefully avoids copying games by companies still in existence. If you know of anyone still holding the rights to games he's copying, I'll guarantee that he'll either try to get the rights to make copies or stop making them. And while you're at it, tell these guys to bring carts over for \$5-\$15 instead of \$20, or better yet, as multi-carts for \$20, and no one will bother to buy the copies because the originals will be cheaper. I'd like to know more about who this consortium is, and what games they want to sell us. Hopefully, not all those Bit carts which were copied to death before any hobbyist ever got an EPROM burner... I keep seeing Greiner blowing smoke about copyrights, but he has no problem selling pirated (professionally, though!) games from Taiwan for \$60. (Russ Perry Jr.)

This "consortium" of businessmen are playing their cards right by asking for the cessation of game copying and, I would not promote any non-permissive copying practices during that time. However, legal copying should be tolerated. I would really be interested in new games for the 2600 and especially the ColecoVision and Atari 7800. I would also be interested in the completion and improvement of the prototype games. If these men would ask for a petition of people pledged to not support piracy while these games are being sold, I say, "Where do I sign?". (Michael Bellman)

Bill Schultz'

ALTERNATE CURRENTS

VIDEOGAME SOUNDTRACKS - MADE IN THE USA

Soundtracks from movies are quite the rage these days. Walk into a local record store on any given day and you're guaranteed to find one, if not two or three soundtrack CD's from a blockbuster flick sitting quite comfortably in the top ten from Billboard magazine. This summer alone we've had *The Crow*, *True Lies*, and *Forrest Gump*, just to name a few. It seems like the time is right for some soundtracks from video games to make their presence felt in a world dominated by soundtracks and Woodstock '94 (can we say "commercialism", boys and girls? Sure. I think we can.).

Mortal Kombat: The Album by The Immortals and the debut CD from **Tommy Tallarico** who is well regarded for his work with Virgin Games may be ready to break some ground for video game based music and soundtracks not seen since Buckner and Garcia's *Pac-Man Fever*.

Mortal Kombat: The Album is a techno/industrial CD based upon your favorite "Kill 'em all and let God sort 'em out" video game. There are ten tracks on the **Mortal Kombat** CD, eight of which are named after your favorite Kombat characters. There's *Johnny Cage (Prepare Yourself)*, *Sub-Zero (Chinese Ninja Warrior)*, *Scorpion (Lost Soul Bent on Revenge)*, *Sonya (Go Go Go)* and so on. If you've noticed, each character has a secondary title attached to their song and therein lies the biggest downfall to this CD. The rappers, singers, minstrels, or whatever you would like to call them must repeat this secondary title one hundred and fifty times each track! I mean... I can live with "Prepare Yourself" being repeated over and over, but "Lost Soul Bent on Revenge" sung quickly a zillion times is just a little too much for my ears. I want to know where they got the guy who raps Sub-Zero (Chinese Ninja Warrior). He sounds like Bruce Lee on queludes! The music, on the other hand, is kickin'. I'm not a big fan of techno or industrial, but this stuff was pretty cool. All of the tracks have that "underground" techno feel to them that probably goes over bit at dance clubs. With the proper exposure, **Mortal Kombat: The Album** might bring some of the dance crowd in the video game arena, or introduce some young gamers to the music world. It may not be the best CD of its kind, but it does have its merits. My head bangin' friends may

disown me, but I kind of like it. A bit repetitive - but cool regardless.

Tommy Tallarico's CD effort on the other hand, was not what I had hoped it would be. If video game soundtracks are going to be unleashed on the world, I don't think we want to hear stuff like Tallarico's debut CD **Virgin Games Greatest Hits Volume One** spearheading the attack. Any CD that has a song called "Bonus Level" is sure to scare away a lot of people. All the stuff on this CD came directly off of the video games themselves. We want new songs from Tommy, not material we already own... at least beef them up so they sound like more crafted pieces. As it stands, this CD sounds too much like video game music and not at all ready for prime time. Instead of being groundbreaking, Tallarico tends to be bland and repetitive in this "compilation" offering. One thing I can't rag on is the musicianship. He is obviously a talented musician who at times can really shred on guitar, but most of the time has his material bogged down with a myriad of synthesizers and drum machines (I hope those were drum machines. If not, he'd better find a new drummer quick!). The music lacks crispness and emotion. Tallarico has some real promise but doesn't come through on this CD. I'd rather listen to the Sega CD **Terminator** soundtrack while playing the game than just relaxing and hearing it by itself.

You gamers out there who are also aspiring musicians should really check out these CD's because with the exploding market and popularity of soundtracks (even the Japanese are releasing the soundtracks to their anime features and popular games - but that's another column) you might hear something that can set you on your way to fame, fortune and the rock n roll lifestyle. I can't recommend the **Tommy Tallarico** CD but check out **Mortal Kombat: The Album**. It's different and will probably even be a collector's item someday. Keep your eyes peeled for more music projects like this in the future. How long before **Street Fighter III** by Nine Inch Nails?





Classic "Endorsed" Games

BY KEVIN OLENIACZ

With regard to today's modern systems, many famous celebrity names appeared in 16-bit titles, especially the sports line. Cal Ripken, Tommy Lasorda and Roger Clemens are just a few who have endorsed Genesis baseball carts. Turn back the clock ten years and one will discover that only two "celebrities" - martial arts expert Chuck Norris and soccer legend Pele - endorsed games for a classic system (2600, ColecoVision). **Nomis'** is dubbed **Chuck Norris Superkicks** (later renamed **Kung Fu Superkicks** when the original manufacturer left the industry), the game itself is lame in terms of graphics and sound and punctuated with slow play mechanics. Pele's is called **Pele's Soccer**, and was also called **Pele's Championship Soccer** for awhile. All other endorsements are rooted to movies and television programs rather than individuals. Animated characters are not true celebrities and are not discussed in this column.

Various companies, most notably 20th Century Fox, designed 2600 carts representing movies. Fox' **Fantastic Voyage** is an outstanding shooter involving a race against time to save a human's heart from clotting. Battle the body's natural defenses along your journey. In contrast, **The Earth Dies Screaming** - in spite of the catchy title - is mediocre at best. The programming isn't even original, as this first-person space shooter is a clone of the PC classic **Star Raiders**. **Spacemaster X-7**, a little-known sci-fi "B" movie, is another hectic shooter but it contains enough addictive aspects to be considered a "closet classic". Other Fox releases include **Alien** (reviewed in these pages), **Megaforce** (an adequate but non spectacular shooter), **Revenge of the Beefsteak Tomatoes** (based on the cult classic) and **Porky's** (loosely based on the silly teenage hi jinx flick that actually spawned a few sequels).

Speaking of classics, Trekkies were pleased when the arcade conversion of **Star Trek** reached home. The Star Wars trilogy spawned four Parker Bros. releases: **Star Wars: The Arcade Game** (scarcest of the lot), **The Empire Strikes Back** (best of the lot), **Jedi Arena** (dud of the lot), and **Death Star Battle**

(prettiest of the lot). Atari's **E.T.**, arguably the focal point of the video game crash of 1984 because of extremely high expectations following the film's success, is an action/adventure contest. Atari's **Raiders of the Lost Ark** is a more involving adventure with a slew of screens to explore. Spectravision's **China Syndrome** is a panic simulation where one must prevent a nuclear meltdown. Two macabre thrillers were reproduced by Wizard Video - **Halloween** and **The Texas Chainsaw Massacre**. Both represent the poor taste from the movie with blood and mayhem incorporated within. Other Atari 2600 theatrical carts include **Ghostbusters** (Activision), **Ghostbusters II** (Salu), **James Bond 007** (Parker Bros.), **Gremlins** and **Krull** (Atari), and **Towering Inferno** (US Games).

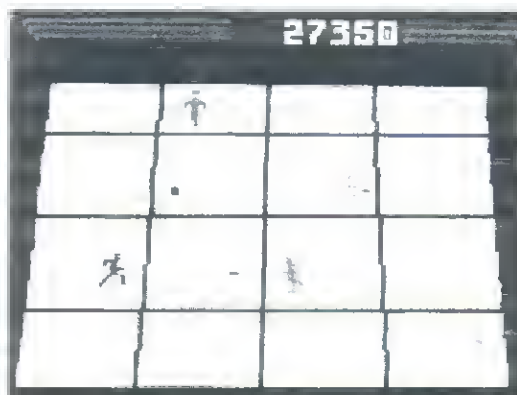
The TV to 2600 scene offers **M*A*S*H** and **Flash Gordon**, both action challenges by Fox, and the **A-Team** and **Dukes of Hazzard**, both in prototype form (neither was released commercially) by Atari. The former is complete but the latter slow motion speed chase seems unpolished to say the least.

James Bond 007, **Star Trek**, **Star Wars: The Arcade Game**, and **Return of the Jedi** were ported to the Atari 5200 based on their Atari 2600 versions with enhanced graphics and sound.

Atari's **Gremlins** is completely revamped and greatly improved as a result - one of the best games in this system's library. **The Last Starfighter** (also by Atari) is a near complete prototype based on the Atari computer



Few movie to videogame translations ever work. Here are two that did: **US Games' Towering Inferno** (above), and **Mattel's TRON Deadly Discs** (below)



favorite **Star Raiders II**. In spite of a few loose ends, it is a pleasure to pop in and play.

Within the modest confines of the intellivision library lies but a quartet of movie-based carts, three of them based on the same movie. Parker Bros.' **The Empire Strikes Back** is poorly constructed (sluggish!) in comparison to the 2600 release. Mattel's **Tron Deadly Discs** is outstanding and addictive. **Tron Solar Sailer** is a unique shooter characterized by excellent voice synthesis. **Tron Maze-a-Tron** is a fast paced maze scroller full of pitfalls and minute tasks.

ColecoVision owners are presented with a healthy selection of endorsed titles. Besides **Buck Rogers**, **Chuck Norris Superkicks**, **James Bond 007**, **M*A*S*H**, **Star Trek** and **Star Wars: The Arcade Game**, all of which can be found on other systems, ColecoVision owners can boast that they have access to a few exclusives. Coleco's **2010** is an intriguing space mission where you must constantly repair malfunctioning support systems or crash into Mars. **War Games** simulates the haywire computer in the film - bent on initiating an all-out nuclear war. **Rocky Super Action Boxing** is used in conjunction with the sword-handled Super Action Controllers. It

puts up quite a fight in terms of graphics and control (it even features true-to-life representations of Stallone and Mr. T). Although not an exclusive, **Dukes of Hazzard** is a first-person driving game for use with the driving controller and nothing like the Atari 2600 game, and **Porky's** is an ultra-rare prototype ported from the 2600 game but with greatly enriched graphics and new screens as well. **Porky's**, as well as **The Fall Guy** never saw store shelves. Finally, noted gambler and "Beat the Video Games" king Ken Uston endorsed **Poker & Blackjack** for the ColecoVision, and a graphically shameful but fast-moving **One-on-One** features basketball stars Dr. J and Larry Bird.

The Atari 7800 and the less popular systems of the time lack any endorsements, save one for the GCE Vectrex. Their version of **Star Trek** is unlike any other home version, revamped as a first-person shooter along the lines of **Star Raiders**. Back in the classic era, manufacturers largely believed that excellent playability and graphics superseded endorsements. It seems this logic has been lost with the passage of time!

Time For A Letter Drive

by Russ Perry Jr.

I (Russ Perry Jr.) was lucky enough to attend the Summer Consumer Electronics show again this year, and in case you haven't heard, Atari had a reasonably large area on the main floor, for the first time in years. The majority of the area was devoted to kiosks (cool design) playing the newest Jaguar games.

From time to time I would see some familiar names and faces, like a couple of the Tramiels, Greg LeBrec, or the programmer of Tempest 2000, Jeff Winter. I saw another name I recognized then, one Dave Staugas. Some of you may remember his name from Krull or Millipede, as he was a programmer way back when. Others may recall his name from the 2600 Programmers guide, which he helped compile.

I, of course, couldn't help but to talk to Dave about the old days at Atari and the like! After a bit of conversation, I brought up the idea I've had for awhile about making a CD-ROM of all the 2600 games. Since we were standing next to the demo model of the Jaguar CD, I told him he should put out a 2600 CD, and a 2600 adaptor. Imagine my surprise when, instead of polite laughter at the idea, I got a contemplative "Hmm".

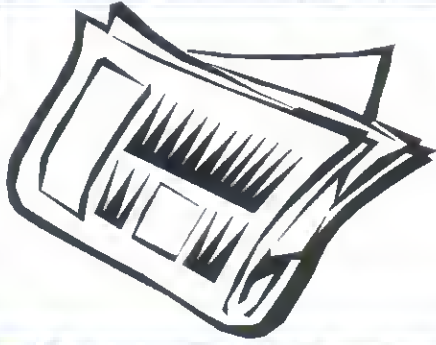
Dave immediately suggested one improvement, that of using software emulation instead of a hardware adaptor, since the Jaguar could easily do it (duh! - why didn't I think of that?). I then pointed out that it would surely sell in the 100's but maybe not in the 1000's or 10000's, enough to actually bother making it. Still he seemed to be giving it consideration, and proposed that it might actually be salable!

So, at this point, I wonder if it isn't time to start a letter drive. I have my doubts that this would ever see the light of day, but anything's possible! Maybe we can ask for follow-ups of 5200, 7800 and XE emulators too. Please respond with your thoughts, and I encourage any of you who really care to write to Atari. Either mention Dave Staugas in your letter, or mark it "Attn: Dave Staugas", and tell them how you'd like to see such a project. I've already sent my vote, and promised Dave my help in trying to get other games (besides Atari's) for the project. I hope others do the same!

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SYSTEMS WANTED: Commodore Vic-20 and C-64, Mattel Aquarius and original Intellivision computer, TRS-80/Color Computer, IBM PC Jr, VTech Socrates (& others?), Quiz Wiz, APF MP1000 & Imagination Machine, ADAM (CV Exp Mod #3 preferred), Entex Adventurevision and Select-A-Game, Parker Bros Starting Line-Up, Play Time LCD Projection System, Sears Telegames Arcade II, Telegames Personal Arcade, Columbia Home Arcade, Video Driver, foreign systems like Philips G7400, pong/dedicated systems such as by National Semiconductor, Heath, Video Action and others, Entex Invaders (?) joystick/game, SciSys TV Chess, many others! Russ Perry Jr, 5970 Scott St, Omro, WI 54963-9413. (414) 685-6187.

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Hangman, Infiltrate, Journey Escape, Jr. Pac-Man, Kung Fu Master, Math Grand Prix, Othello, Pitfall II, Planet Patrol, Popeye, Sneak N Peek, Solar Fox, Sorcerer, Spider-Man, Star Ship (03), Star Wars Death Star, Star Wars Jedi, Summer Games, Task Force, Towering Inferno, Venture, Winter Games, Word Zapper, Zaxxon. ColecoVision - Pitfall!. Intellivision - Kool-Aid Man \$3 each. Channel F #2, 3, 4, 9, 12, 13, 17 \$2 each. Shipping \$1 first game, \$0.50 each add'l. Will trade. Dale M. Curtis, 1183 17th St SE, Salem, OR 97302-1311. (503) 363-5338.

MASTER SYSTEM Games for sale, cheap prices. Will trade also. For list, send name and address to Clint Dyer, 2007 Harrison Ave, San Mateo, CA 94403, or Prodigy via #YKHP23A.

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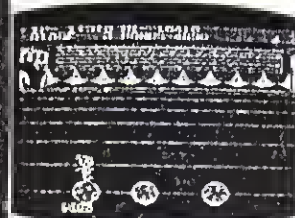
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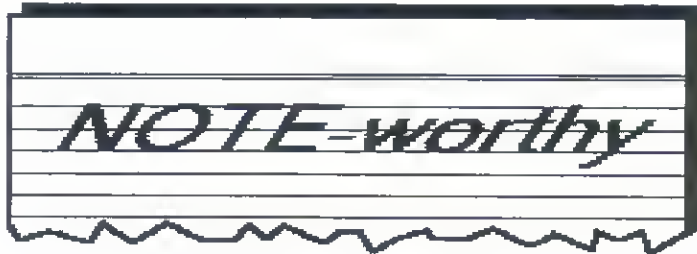
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SONIC & KNUCKLES

We recently received a nice 'lil press kit from Manning, Selvage & Lee promoting Sega's Sonic & Knuckles, the latest in the line of 16-bit Sonic games. This one really looks like an improvement (I wasn't satisfied with the previous sequels), with much better graphics and variety in the gameplay. The demo of the game mentions "downward compatibility", which in the world of PC's means you can use the older versions with the new one with little loss in functionality. When I asked a representative to elaborate, he couldn't say much. From what I can tell, you'll be able to plug Sonic 2 or Sonic 3 into the new game, at least allowing you to play as Knuckles in those games... maybe more! I like gimmicks. Look for it in October.

VIDEO VIEWS LEAVES FANDOM

Video Views has been around longer than Digital Press, and in this editor's humble opinion, it was always one of the best around. Sadly, VV editor Ulrich Kempf is leaving fandom to pursue a college degree (pre-law). Ulrich is a class act, and if you're reading this my friend, feel free to drop us a line whenever you get the urge to write again. Best of luck to Ulrich in his undoubtedly bright future!

COMING NEXT ISSUE

We didn't just do the questionnaire a few issues ago (Liz Santulli: Completely Nude, DP #17) to update our files - if you recall, we also asked you what you wanted to see in future DP's. Next issue, we'll fill your "wish list". If there are any last minute requests, send them in now! The next issue of DP will be completely "request"- driven! I'm also considering adding a phone line here for DP callers only. Maybe Liz & I could take calls and use the conversations in a regular column. What do you think? For now, write or E-mail us on America On-line (DigitPress) or through the Internet at digitpress@aol.com.